



**U.S. Department of Justice**  
Executive Office for Immigration Review  
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# FACT SHEET

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## **EOIR Headquarters Immigration Court**

The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) established the Headquarters Immigration Court (HQIC) on July 19, 2004. The HQIC, which is based at EOIR Headquarters in Falls Church, VA, is comprised of two Immigration Judges who hear cases via video-teleconferencing (VTC). The HQIC, which increases the number of Immigration Courts from 52 to 53, assists other courts with their dockets. Through the use of VTC hookups, the HQIC provides flexibility in addressing short-term resource needs as they arise in Immigration Courts nationwide.

### **VTC**

VTC provides real-time transmission of audio and video between two or more locations and permits individuals to see, hear, and speak with each other as though they are at the same location. VTC hearings are held in Immigration Courts throughout the United States pursuant to congressional mandate at 8 U.S.C. 1229a(b)(2)(A)(iii), section 240(b)(2)(A)(iii) of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Congress made no distinction between an in-person hearing and a hearing conducted by VTC, including no requirement for consent of the participants to conduct a VTC hearing.

VTC does not change the adjudicative quality or decisional outcomes. Hearings conducted by VTC are fair and fully protect the participants' right to procedural due process. There is a means of transmitting and receiving additional evidence between all locations and all participants. The audio/video transmission is secure and the participants' privacy is protected.

Public access to VTC hearings is governed by the provisions of 8 CFR 1003.27 in the same manner as on-site, in-person hearings.

### **Jurisdiction and Venue**

HQIC does not accept the filing of charging documents. Charging documents are filed at the base city court. Jurisdiction vests, and all proceedings commence, when the charging document is filed in the base city court. Venue lies with the base city court or hearing location within the administrative control for that base city court.

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During the time that a case is docketed with an HQIC judge, all motions, applications, and other filings continue to be made to the base city court.

### **HQIC Immigration Judges**

Charles Adkins-Blanch, formerly EOIR's General Counsel, and David Neal, former Special Counsel to the Director, have been named as the Immigration Judges for the HQIC.

Charles Adkins-Blanch was appointed Immigration Judge in June 2004. Prior to this appointment, he served as General Counsel for EOIR from May 2000 to June 2004, after serving in the position in an acting capacity for 1 year. He received his undergraduate degree from Grinnell College in 1984 and his law degree from George Washington University's National Law Center in 1990. Before joining EOIR's Office of the General Counsel in April 1995, Judge Adkins-Blanch worked for the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) from August 1990 to April 1995, where he served as a judicial law clerk under the Attorney General's Honor Law Program and was later promoted to the position of attorney-advisor. From 1989 to 1990, he clerked in private practice with the firm of Maggio & Kattar specializing in immigration and nationality law. Judge Adkins-Blanch has also served in several legal intern and law clerk positions including working for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in their Washington Liaison Office providing legal counseling to asylum seekers. He is a member of both the Virginia and District of Columbia Bars.

David Neal was appointed Immigration Judge in June 2004. Prior to this appointment, he served as special counsel to the Director, EOIR, from January 2003 to June 2004. Judge Neal received his undergraduate degree in 1981 from Wabash College, his masters degree in 1984 from Harvard Divinity School, and his law degree in 1989 from Columbia Law School. From October 2001 to January 2003, Judge Neal served as chief counsel to the Senate Immigration Subcommittee. He was an attorney-advisor for the BIA from November 1996 to October 2001. Prior to joining EOIR, Judge Neal practiced immigration law in Los Angeles from June 1993 to October 1996 and also served as the director of policy analysis for the American Immigration Lawyers Association from August 1990 to May 1993. He is a member of the New York and District of Columbia Bars.

EOIR is a component of the Department of Justice which, on behalf of the Attorney General, adjudicates cases involving charges of immigration violations. EOIR has more than 200 Immigration Judges located in 53 Immigration Courts nationwide to conduct proceedings and decide cases, the BIA to hear appeals of Immigration Judge decisions, and the Office of the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer to handle employment-related immigration matters.

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